

National Sea Grant Advisory Board (NSGAB) Spring Meeting
March 7-8, 2016
Meeting Minutes

Washington Plaza Hotel
10 Thomas Circle, NW,
Washington, DC

Monday, March 7, 2016
OPEN TO PUBLIC 8:30 AM-5:00 PM EST

Roll Call:

NSGAB: Dale Baker, Patricia Birkholz, Paulinus Chigbu, Rosanne Fortner, E. Gordon Grau, Judith Gray, Brian Helmuth, Amber Mace, James Murray, Nancy Rabalais, Rolland Schmitten, Richard Vortmann, Nikola Garber (*ex-officio*), Sylvain DeGuise (*ex-officio*)

National Sea Grant Office (NSGO): Jim Berkson, Margaret (Peg) Brady, Dorn Carlson, Brooke Carney, April Croxton, Laura Early, Jonathan Eigen (Designated Federal Officer), Kyrstin Fornace, Julia Galkiewicz, Chris Hayes, Jennifer Hinden, Matthew Lurie, Amanda McCarty, Karen Pianka, Elizabeth Rohring

Other: Nancy Balcom, Connecticut Sea Grant; Mona Behl, Georgia Sea Grant; Rebecca Briggs, Hawaii Sea Grant; Terry Donaldson, University of Guam; Jim Hurley, University of Wisconsin Sea Grant; LaDonn Swann, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant; Richard West, Ex-NSGAB Member

Welcome, introductions, review agenda, approval of minutes, Chair's update (Dale Baker, Chair, NSGAB)

Motion by Mr. Vortmann to approve the November 2015 minutes with one recommended change given by Dr. Murray.
Dr. Mace 2nd, unanimous approval.
Motion approved.

National Sea Grant College Program (NSGCP) Update (Nikola Garber, Deputy Director, NSGCP)
Handout: FY2014-2016 Sea Grant Spending Plan

Comments, Q/A: Mr. Baker noted in NOAA's Budget Report, there was a large reduction in projects. Mr. Eigen noted the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) asked programs for total number of projects that would be impacted, this year.

Mr. Vortmann asked for an explanation of a Small Business Research Initiative. Mr. Eigen replied there's a requirement for the federal government to set aside extramural research funds for small business'. The NSGO decides what they fund out of the SBIR. These are projects done at the state level, but have to be done by small business.

NOAA Research Update & Discussion (Craig McLean, Deputy Assistant Administrator, NOAA Research)

Topics discussed: Office of Atmospheric Research (OAR) and NOAA Leadership staffing changes, FY16 Budget; Sea Grant Reauthorization, Sea Grant 50th, partnership opportunities.

Mr. McLean would like to best utilize Sea Grant, find overlap, and figure out how to avoid competition, and unnecessary spending. There are several examples of where Sea Grant has excelled, Deep Water Horizon, Hurricane Sandy, Hurricane Rita. The 50th Anniversary is a great opportunity to learn what Sea Grant does, and better educate everyone.

Sea Grant has several partnerships within Dr. Kathryn Sullivan's four objectives. There is an option to work with the National Weather Service on Weather Ready Nation. Another option is in the area of organizational excellence and to demonstrate how we best utilize the public's money.

Comments, Q/A: Mrs. Gray suggested bringing the Sea Grant model into laboratories to recruit scientists. Mr. McLean replied the funding levels now only allow the labs to focus on the recipient of the product. They are working on building relationships, bridging gaps between research and operation.

Dr. Grau noted one of the big problems is that the general public doesn't understand the connection between what they do and climate, on a daily basis. Sea Grant can play a major role in connecting what happens in OAR, and the needs of the community; and translating that to the public. It's better to acquaint Sea Grant extension, and faculty, with what OAR is doing, and how it can affect the communities. Mr. McLean mentioned the possibility of an OAR-wide Summit. Representatives from the NSGAB, SGA, etc., would be invited.

Dr. Murray noted the recent review of Sea Grant Extension Liaison positions. There were two parts to the report, one is how to make the process better, and the other is an opportunity to socialize NOAA to the Sea Grant Model, and to use it in similar positions. The NSGAB would like to know how to bring it to the attention of higher level positions. Mr. McLean noted this is something that can go into the marketing plan. It will be important in teaching other line offices what Sea Grant does.

Sea Grant Association (SGA)/Sea Grant Week update (Sylvain DeGuise, President, SGA)

Comments, Q/A: Mona Behl asked why at a national level is diversity not a topic to discuss. She would like to know how diversity is represented amongst the SGA director network.

Member-at-Large Slate and vote (D.Baker, NSGAB)

The Nominating Committee nominated for Member-at-Large, Dr. James Murray pending no other nominations. No other nominations were brought forward.

Mr. Schmitten motioned to approve the nomination put forth by the Nominating committee, as is. Dr. Fortner 2nd, unanimous approval.

Motion approved.

10-Year NOAA Sea Grant Aquaculture Vision (LaDon Swann, SGA)

50th Video (Link)

Comments, Q/A: Dr. Mace suggested Dr. Swann add language about sustainability, or environmental impact. It's important to highlight the work that Sea Grant already does.

Senator Birkholz noted there is nothing in the document about the Great Lakes, and aquatic invasive species.

Mr. Schmitten noted there are a lot of recommendations, but they need to be categorized by priorities.

Strategic Planning (Peg Brady, Detail, NSGO; S. DeGuise, SGA)

Comments, Q/A:

It was discussed that the Strategic Planning should be finalized, and move forward regardless of the administration transition.

Dr. Grau suggested adding additional focus areas. The largest contributors to coastal economies are energy, and tourism. If Sea Grant is going to address coasts as they are, then major topics need to be discussed. Coastal development is the biggest contributor to coastal vulnerability. It is also the bigger contributor to environmental degradation. In terms of thinking for the next 50-100 years, these are things that need to be addressed.

Dr. Murray suggested having representation from the NOAA planning office in the steering committee. Mrs. Brady noted she is working on meeting with NOAA leadership and to have that conversation. Dr. Garber noted we are looking at this as a marketing strategy. That way we can include background.

Dr. Grau asked if anyone from the Department of Commerce (DOC) is going to be involved. Mrs. Brady noted she's made some connections with the DOC planning unit, and she expects there will be some engagement.

Focus Area Update (NSGO Knauss Fellows)

Comments, Q/A:

Dr. Rabalais asked the fellows to give a sense of the cross cutting areas of the focus groups. Mrs. Fornace noted she feels that Healthy Coastal Ecosystems is by definition Resilient. Erin feels Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development crosses all focus areas. A lot of accomplishments and impacts involve Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development.

Dr. Helmuth asked what the sense of efficiencies of scale is. Mrs. Fornace noted it would be hard to judge at a national level. Sea Grant has very strong connections with a lot of local communities, and they all require different things. Mrs. Shew noted in the climate area, she feels there are a lot of places for opportunities for Sea Grant to be on the ground for outreach and funding, but also collaborate with a lot of agencies on climate. That way better collaboration could come into play.

Dr. DeGuise noted there's a need for the focus teams. Dr. Murray noted this is a PIE II recommendation.

Globalization of the Sea grant Model (D. Vortmann)

Dr. Vortmann noted the purpose of the discussion is to decide whether or not the Sea Grant model would work internationally.

Comments, Q/A:

Dr. Rabalais noted there are other groups actively working towards doing the same thing, and there are several universities that are involved with Mexico, and Cuba. These groups include the Consortium of Institutions for Marine Research of the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean, Gulf Accord idea, and the Bilateral Forum on Higher Education, Innovation, and Research. She recommends there be some greater education about the different things that are going on, and to try and get the universities involved.

Mrs. Gray noted NOAA's research laboratories work internationally, for example the Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory works with the University of Miami on Interconnectivity of Meso-American Reefs.

Dr. DeGuise suggested the Department of State (DOS). Dr. Murray noted Rene Eppi (NOAA Office International Affairs) can open doors at the DOS to bring Sea Grant issues to their attention. The DOS is interested by Sea Grant's model because it's the national government working with and listening to local and regional interests.

Dr. Helmuth noted there is a contact at Woods Hole Sea Grant that is on the advisory board on the One Ocean Initiative.

Mr. Schmitt addressed the topic of Cuba, and suggested the group go to the Assistant Secretary of State, and have them contact people at foreign embassies who would talk to their environmental person and evaluate the usefulness of the program.

Mr. Vortmann suggested inviting Korea, Indonesia, and possibly Japan to Sea Grant Week to discuss international issues. Mr. Baker noted Darren Lerner from Hawaii Sea Grant is planning a trip to Japan in May. He was invited to go as the Chair of the NSGAB.

Dr. Grau noted he has long term relationships with several Japanese universities. They're beginning to understand that they need to better connect with their communities to explain the utility of their research. Jim Sullivan was a strong advocate for Sea Grant in Japan, as well. There is a plan for a meeting in Japan at some point to have Korea and Japan to talk about Sea Grant.

Dr. Grau noted a lot of graduate students from Japan have been funded at U.S. universities with Sea Grant money, which increases their good will towards the Sea Grant network. They've been funding U.S. graduate students, as well. Cuba is considering having a scientific symposium on relevant issues. Money is being provided to support U.S. travelers to the symposium, not funding it entirely.

Mr. Vortmann suggested having a database of Sea Grant funded foreign students who have returned to their countries, and what they are doing now. That would help display what contacts Sea Grant already has.

Program Implementation and Evaluation (PIE) II Review (Dick West, PIE Chair; Chris Hayes, NSGO)

Comments, Q/A:

Dr. Murray recommended leaving the Site Visit report as is, with no grade, and including it in the final set of materials for the Individual Review Panel (IRP) to evaluate. Admiral West noted there is not enough time for the IRP to evaluate the Site Visit report again, and that they should be present for the site visit. Dr. Helmuth noted this would mean the IRP would have to meet twice throughout the process.

Mr. Hayes noted as an author of several Site Visit reports, it includes a lot about the successes of the program. The recommendation is to not have a 1-5 scale rating.

Dr. Grau recommended swapping the Performance Review Plan and Site Visit. The IRP makes a tentative evaluation based on whatever information is given by the programs, except that in this case the Site Visit would say they uncovered a whole bunch of things submitted in the evaluation that was provided. Mr. Vortmann noted that would put more weight on the reviewer and program. Dr. DeGuise noted the Site Visit report would now have value because it would be included in the overall evaluation of the program and given to the IRP to evaluate.

Dr. Rabalais motioned to accept the recommendations of the PIE II Committee to forward to the National Sea Grant Office for their benefit in improving the review system.

Mr. Vortmann 2nd, unanimous approval.

Motion approved.

March 8, 2016

Call to Order and follow up from previous days meeting

SWOT Analysis Follow-up:

Mr. Baker noted the NSGAB would like to further discuss the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) for the entire Sea Grant program. This is important for future focus teams, SGA priorities, political transition, and what the role of the NSGAB should be within NOAA.

Mr. Vortmann suggested having a SWOT Analysis of the entire Sea Grant program that involved Sea Grant leadership (NSGO, SGA, and NSGAB). Mr. Vortmann volunteered to facilitate the analysis. The leadership of the NSGAB would include Mr. Baker, Dr. Mace, and Mr. Schmitten. Dr. Garber suggested the SWOT analysis work in conjunction with strategic planning.

Focus Teams Follow-up:

Dr. Grau recommended focus teams be resurrected, and should be in collaboration with the SGA. A lot of successes have come out of the focus teams such as the signing of the NOAA Environmental

Protection Act Memorandum of Understanding. The most important part of focus teams is that it creates new ways of what Sea Grant can do, and it's highly valuable.

Dr. Garber recommended using focus teams during the implementation phase of the PIE Committee recommendation.

Dr. Murray noted the genesis of the theme teams and the idea was to have all discussions out of the way, have a blue print ready to go that the network agreed on, so that should an opportunity arise, Sea Grant could promote it together. The focus teams were in one sense designed to parallel the strategic planning effort and to the intellectual power relating the theme teams. The most important function was the intellectual futuristic thinking.

Dr. Grau motioned for the NSGAB to recommend to the NSGO to reconvene the concept of focus teams.

Dr. Gray 2nd, unanimous vote.

Motion approved.

Public Comment Period

No public comment

NOAA Liaison Report (D. Baker, NSGAB; Elizabeth Rohring, NSGO)

Mr. Schmitten noted the report has been carried out, but in an ad hoc basis. The next steps will be to look at standard operating procedures, and consistency.

Dr. Grau asked what NOAA Liaisons do, and why were they started. Mr. Baker noted the liaisons take the information developed at the lab, and send it through the Sea Grant network. It's supposed to be a NOAA/Sea Grant relationship. Dr. Grau noted he would find it beneficial to get a report from the liaisons to get to know them better, and learn about what they do. Ms. Rohring noted a series of articles are being put together with that information and will be made available on the NSGO website.

Ms. Gray suggested Mr. Craig McLean and a group from Sea Grant, do a pilot program in one of the labs and listen to what they do. Mr. Vortmann asked if NOAA knows these positions exist, and how do we generate a benefit in this investment. Mr. Baker noted the liaison positions need to be marketed to NOAA, which is one of the recommendations. Mr. Hayes noted the Sea Grant Exchange program conducts webinars for all of NOAA to see and they report on the program. This could be a model for the liaison positions.

Mr. Vortmann asked how many Sea Grant dollars are invested into this. Mr. Eigen noted about \$280K in FY16. Dr. Garber noted the group also needs to think if it's worth allocating money for or if the funds can be used elsewhere. Mr. Schmitten noted the standard operating procedures will include: recruitment, operations, reporting, funding, and evaluation. Mr. Baker noted there should be a request for proposal for these positions, and that money should be set aside.

Mr. Vortmann asked what the reason is behind having these positions. Mr. Murray noted the original intent was Sea Grant wanted to show it could be the extension arm of NOAA, and help make NOAA products and services more relevant to NOAA and the public. He feels Sea Grant would receive some great proposals and marketing by expanding the liaison positions, and having it be an open competition for Sea Grant programs, or any NOAA projects that needed outreach.

Ms. Rohring questioned how Sea Grant gets NOAA to support it because it's not being effective at the program level where it needs to happen. This is where the RFP needs to happen. Dr. Rabalais mentioned the RFP would make the liaisons less worried about their jobs.

Mr. Baker noted there will be a final report by the Fall 2016 meeting.

National Ocean Sciences Bowl (NOSB) Update (Rosanne Fortner, NSGAB)

Dr. Fortner noted almost all of the Sea Grant programs do something with their regional NOSB. This can be anything from hosting a regional NOSB, national competition, or volunteering. At the present time Sea Grant has a substantial involvement nationwide, and the question remains whether Sea Grant should be supporting in a national way the efforts of the NOSB. Dr. Fortner feels it should remain the prerogative of the individual state programs. If Sea Grant has additional education money, it should be going to educational efforts deemed important within the programs.

Admiral West noted the NOSB committee is not asking for Sea Grant money, although the funding has gone down. This should be a premier education thing for NOAA. More money needs to be put into the NOSB program to be given to Sea Grant programs to support. The NOSB committee will fund a summit as to how they can go forward with funding. The goal is to get more money, so it can be given to Sea Grant to support the NOSB. If the Sea Grant programs don't host the regional programs like they do now, the NOSB will go away. Admiral West suggests Dr. Fortner to attend the summit and go from there. Mr. Schmitten noted he is interested in supporting the NOSB on the Hill during his next visit.

Sea Grant 50th Anniversary Update (Brooke Carney, NSGO)-handout

Mr. Schmitten noted he created a draft Presidential proclamation that will go through the Department of Commerce and NOAA. Senator Birkholz recommended every Governor create a proclamation in every state we have a major Sea Grant program.

Biennial Report Update (R. Fortner, NSGAB)

Dr. Fortner noted the Biennial Report to Congress is required from the NSGAB every two years. The layout can be handled internally for this issue, and print will come from Puerto Rico Sea Grant.

Senator Birkholz suggested including with the Biennial Report state by state fact sheets that report on number of dollars Sea Grant has provided to that specific state. Dr. Fortner suggested that each State program create the one-pager. Dr. Garber suggested a draft letter that the directors' could send with the Biennial Report to their state legislature. It was also suggested to add information about extension liaisons in sentinel sites to make them more visible.

Other suggestions included adding higher elevated recommendations, why Sea Grant should have full-time employees, and information on focus teams and why they are important.

Member Updates

Dr. Garber noted Mr. McLean has mentioned a marketing plan for Sea Grant. He wants her and Ms. Rohring to pursue the idea of a marketing plan, but with staffing limitations, they need support from the SGA and NSGAB.

Discussion of meeting topics and wrap-up (D. Baker, NSGAB)

Meeting Adjourned